



Mid-Cities Commodore Club

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Faster Floppies Through Software

An Amiga Software Review by Johnny Kitchens

Mid-Cities Commodore Club

One of the top subjects of computers today is speed. How fast is it, how many can it do, or how long do I have to wait. It's these thoughts that help sell Hard Drives, Accelerator Cards, and more memory. Speed sells in computers as well as a lot of other things we have to live with. If we could just figure out how to speed-up TV commercials. Oh Well...

One area of the Amiga that definitely needs help in speed is the disk drives. One way to speed up the Amiga disk was to format a fresh disk and copy the disk. As you use the disk, files will become scattered about and speed will decrease. Help does exist in the form of software. One program is in the public domain called Fastdisk, and the other is a commercial piece called B.A.D. which stands for "Blitz A Disk".

Both of these programs appear to perform the same basic function: Reorganize the disk more efficiently. The speedup caused by these two programs are quite noticeable in some instances, but less so in others. Both of these programs offer a choice of speed-up. You can optimize for Workbench so that the icons and windows open faster. You can optimize for CLI so that directories pop up faster. One thing definite is the drive noises are decreased. This has got to be an advantage in itself. I even noticed that B.A.D. allows me to do a "list" sometimes and the drive doesn't even run, no light, no sound, nothing. The creator of B.A.D. points this out in his docs. I was skeptical, but it does it sometimes - not always, but it does it.

Fastdisk is about 13K in size, and it is available from the Mid-Cities Commodore Club librarian on club disk MCCC-A_101. After using this program for some time I have had only one problem. It ceased to work going from df0: to df1:. After trying a different disk, I switched to df1: to df0: and it's been working

fine since. Maybe my df0: is getting old. Fastdisk has been a standard part of my Workbench for a long time now and it works.

B.A.D. is about 50K in size, and is available at a suggested retail of \$39.95, a little less if you shop around. The first thing I noticed when opening its package was no paper work at all. All the documentation is on the disk. You can begin using B.A.D. without even reading anything. It is truly a click and run kind of program. B.A.D. has a few advantages over Fastdisk such as being able to work on hard drives and my favorite - RAD:. You can use B.A.D. to copy a whole disk to RAD: much faster than Workbench's "copy all" command. While the disk is there in RAD:, make adjustments, deletes, or add whatever. When you're satisfied use B.A.D. to copy it back to disk. Do not use it on disk containing disk based copy protection, but if the disk can be copied using Workbench's copy command B.A.D. will work. B.A.D. v3.1 now recognizes and works on FFS disk and hard drives as well. The combination of FFS and B.A.D. is a real boost to the Amiga.

B.A.D. requires a minimum of 370K of free memory, and preferably two disk drives. It will work with one disk drive, but process times could be 30-45 minutes long. For hard drives you need 24K of memory for each meg you process.

I like B.A.D. a lot and I recommend it to everyone. It appears to be well supported with more enhancements on the way. A 24hr BBS is listed in the docs for questions and technical assistance.

My recommendation is to try Fastdisk. If you like what it does for you, give B.A.D. a try. Your disks will be better for it.

Captain Blood

An Amiga Software Review by Bill Raecke

Mid-Cities Commodore Club

Picture yourself a computer programmer. Picture yourself writing the ultimate game experience. A game set in its own galaxy: Hydra. A galaxy with 32,768 different worlds. A galaxy with 14 unique alien races, each with its own language and social system. Then picture everything going wrong the first time that the program is tested. You (Captain Blood) are sucked into your own creation. In the process, your genetic structure was fragmented - there are now five clones running around Hydra with

portions of your vital fluids. If you don't find them soon, you will perish.

This is the basic premise of the Captain Blood by Mindscape. And quite a

premise it is. Sounds as though it could make an interesting movie. Your goal is to find all five genetic clones, disintegrate them to assimilate them back into yourself, find the beautiful Ondoyante, Torka (who, I am assured, has a very generous nature and is looking for some company), and find your way out of the game.

As the game begins, you find yourself in pretty bad shape. Since some of your vital fluids were taken by the clones, the auto-bionic sensor has already started replacing some of your essential parts - for example, your entire right arm - with mechanical substitutes. If you don't find the first clone within 2 1/2 hours you will be unable to continue the game. Finding a clone gives you an additional 2 1/2 hours of playing time.

As the game begins, you find yourself at the control panel of the spaceship you created looking through the viewport at a planet. At the top of the screen is a readout that shows your present coordinates within the galaxy Hydra. At the bottom of the screen are six control buttons - only three of which are active - which allow you to select among three options. (Different buttons will become active as different screens present themselves during play.) Button six will give you a close-up view of the planet; button 5 will destruct the planet; button 4 will allow you to eject an Oorxx onto the planet's surface. The Oorxx are creatures which you may control via remote control. They are used to land on a planet's surface and make contact with the inhabitants. You will need to converse with aliens in this game since there are 32,768 worlds to explore and only 1 in 500 has any life at all. You need to find the five on which your clones are hiding. The alien on the

first planet (there is always an alien on the first planet) should be able to give you some useful information.

But first you need to land your Oorxx. You will see a fractal landscape you must skim across. Follow the direction arrows to the landing site. Don't fly too high or enemy missiles may shoot you down. Don't fly too low or you may crash into a mountain or other obstruction. Eventually you will find a canyon. Fly the length of

the canyon (trying not to crash into the walls on either side or the obstructions within it) and you will reach the landing site. This is the action portion of the game. It is not terribly difficult but

it does provide an interesting diversion.

Once you have landed, the resident alien will greet you. You converse with aliens using the UPCOM (Universal Protocol of Communication) which you developed when you wrote this game. All aliens understand this form of communication. It actually consists of a series of icons (120 in all), each of which represents a word. The resident alien will speak first. You may decode by moving your hand over the icons which he supplies. You respond by selecting icons to form simple sentences. Pump him for information - but he may want something in return. The first alien should be able to provide you the coordinates of another world which has life.

Conversing with aliens really seems to be the heart of the game. You must find out what they want and try to find a way to satisfy them in order to find out what you need to know. As in any good adventure game, you will be faced with puzzles within puzzles. For example, although your main goal is to find your clones, you will find yourself trying to find and free Yoko's father. Yoko is an Izwal, a peaceful race who are masters of science. Yoko's father was captured and imprisoned by an warlike race and Yoko needs your help.

One of the dangers of the game is getting lost in conversation. Time passes quickly. Don't forget, you are up against a time limit. After about two hours, your hand will begin to shake as you become weaker and it becomes very difficult to control your conversations with aliens or to control your next jump via hyperspace to the next inhabited planet. As time progresses, the shaking gets worse. After about 2 1/4 hours, the game is totally beyond your control. By that

Software Provided by
MINDSCAPE, INC.

Grand Prix Circuit

A C64 Software Review by Eldor Luedtke, Jr.

Mid-Cities Commodore Club

If you like Formula One racing, I think you will love this one, it has something for all of use armchair Formula One Drivers. This is not one of those racing games that puts a little car on the screen for you to drive - it puts you right where you need to be, in the drivers seat. What this means is that you get the drivers view of the track, not the one from the GoodYear Blimp or the car behind you as with so many others. Even the rear view mirrors work.

The first thing you will want to do is enter your name as the driver, set the number of laps to race and set the difficulty level. You can run from 1 to 99 laps and there are five difficulty levels from Beginner (where you have automatic shifting, can't spin out or blow your engine and the other drivers handle you with kid driving gloves) to Pro (where you run against the best and everything goes).

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Captain Blood

Continued from Page 2

time you must have located at least one clone and assimilated him in order to extend your life and your playing time. You can, of course, save your game at any time to a data disk.

This is a very involved game. Games such as Hacker and In Search of the Most Amazing Thing (from my C64 days) come to mind as being somewhat similar. But Captain Blood is much more involved and is better done than either of those. The graphics are good. The sound effects are excellent. The theme music is by Jean-Michel Jarre. The game play is addicting.

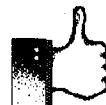
There are three ways you may race in Grand Prix Circuit: Practice - for shaving seconds of your lap times, Single Race - to run one race on one of the eight tracks, and Championship Circuit - where you run all eight tracks. When running the Championship Circuit, you can save the game between any race to continue at a later time.

On those longer races you will even make pit stops where you have your left, right or all tires changed (level three and up).

There are three teams you may race for, McLaren, Ferrari and Williams. Each car has it's good and weak points.

Before each race you must make one solo lap to qualify and determine your starting position, If you don't make it (crash or take more than three minutes) you can't race.

Each of the eight tracks are detailed very nicely and the graphics are great. I could go on all day about this one, but I'm in the middle of the Championship Circuit and it's time to get back to it, so that's it 'till next time. It's back to the races for me.



Software Terminal

Amiga Software and Hardware
C64 Software

3014 Alta Mere Drive
Fort Worth, Texas
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How have I done so far? Don't ask. I have yet to find my first clone. Just having played for the first time today, however, I'm not too discouraged. Will I play some more? You bet! I'm hooked!

My recommendation? Buy it!



ANSI Control Sequences

Amiga Reference Information by Bill Raecke

Mid-Cities Commodore Club

I thought it might be time to review the ANSI command sequences used by the Amiga. The Amiga uses a standard set of commands which you may use to set various features of your printer. You may also use a subset of ANSI command sequences to control your console device - also known as the CLI. Using this standard simplifies application development both in software available commercially and in your own script files, AREXX programs, and the like.

When interfacing with the printer device, the standard commands are translated by the print driver you have selected via preferences into the printer specific codes required by your printer. The disadvantage to this method, of course, is that your printer may have special features not available via the standard ANSI sequences supported. In this case you may send printer specific codes directly to the printer via either the PAR: or SER: device (depending on which port you are using for your printer). Codes sent in this manner will be sent "as is" with no translation provided by the Amiga.

Which commands can be used? Any of Amiga's standard CLI commands can be used. You may "ECHO", "TYPE", or "COPY". For example:

ECHO "*ec"

This command will clear the CLI and place the prompt line on line two in the CLI window.

ECHO > PRT: "*ec"

This command will RESET the printer by using standard Amiga redirection to send the same command to the printer device.

Note that in the above examples, the sequence "*e" is the recognized by the ECHO command as ESC. This allows you to use these commands even if you are using ED which will not support special characters such as ESC.

Now -- on to the commands themselves. This is not a complete list, but it will get you through most problems. ESC stands for the escape character (ASCII 27, HEX 1B). Not all features will be supported by all printers. If a feature is not supported, nothing will be sent.

Sequence	Feature	CLI	Sequence	Feature	CLI	Sequence	Feature	CLI
ESCc	reset	yes	ESC[Iz	NLQ off		ESC[3 F	letter space (justify)	
ESC#1	initialize		ESC[2v	superscript on		ESC[I F	word fill (auto center)	
ESCD	line feed	yes	ESC[lv	superscript off				
ESCE	return line feed	yes	ESC[4v	subscript on		ESC[0z	1/8" line spacing	
ESCM	reverse line feed	yes	ESC[3v	subscript off		ESC[lz	1/6" line spacing	
			ESC[0v	normalize the line		ESC[nt	set form length n	
ESC[0m	normal character set	yes	ESC[	partial line up		ESC[nq	perf skip n (n>0)	
ESC[3m	italics on	yes	ESCK	partial line down		ESC[0q	perf skip off	
ESC[23m	italics off							
ESC[4m	underline on	yes	ESC(B	US character set		ESC#9	left margin set	
ESC[24m	underline off		ESC(R	French character set		ESC#0	right margin set	
ESC[lm	boldface on	yes	ESC(K	German character set		ESC#8	top margin set	
ESC[22m	boldface off		ESC(A	UK character set		ESC#2	bottom margin set	
ESC[30m to			ESC(E	Danish I character set		ESC[Pnl;pn2r	top & bottom margin set	
ESC[39m	set foreground color yes (second digit represents color number)	yes	ESC(H	Swedish character set		ESC[Pn;Pn2s	left & right margin set	
ESC[40m to			ESC(Y	Italian character set		ESC#3	clear margins	
ESC[49m	set background color yes (second digit represents color number)	yes	ESC(Z	Spanish character set				
			ESC(J	Japanese character set		ESCH	set horizontal tab	
ESC[0w	normal pitch		ESC(6	Norwegian character set		ESCJ	set vertical tab	
ESC[2w	elite on		ESC(C	Danish II character set		ESC[0g	clear horizontal tab	
ESC[lw	elite off					ESC[3g	clear all horizontal tabs	
ESC[4w	condensed on		ESC[2p	proportional spacing on		ESC[lg	clear vertical tab	
ESC[3w	condensed off		ESC[lp	proportional spacing off		ESC[4g	clear all vertical tabs	
ESC[5'z	shadow print off		ESC[Op	proportional spacing clear		ESC#4	clear all horizontal and vertical tabs	
ESC[4'z	doublestrike on		ESC[n E	set proportional offset				
ESC[3'z	doublestrike off		ESC[5 F	auto left justify		ESC#5	set default tabs	
ESC[2'z	NLQ on		ESC[7 F	auto right justify		ESC[P'n'x	extended commands	
			ESC[6 F	auto full justify				
			ESC[0 F	auto justify off				

Printing Numbers

C-64 Basic Tutorial by Fred Mayes

Commodore Users of Bartlesville

Someone asked at the last meeting how to make columns of numbers so that the decimal point lined up. He was writing a program in Basic and was having problems doing this. I believe someone else helped him, but this is a fairly simple problem which I have solved before as, I would imagine, have several others. It is worthwhile going through the thought process of how to handle a problem like this.

First of all, you need to understand what is happening to your number when you print it. Basic will put a space in front of your number to make room for a minus sign if needed. If it is a whole number, then the number is displayed with no decimal point. There will be no trailing zeros after the number right of the decimal point. If you are dealing with two decimal places (dollars and cents), then you will want the number rounded up to the nearest cent. You will want an even number of dollars to be shown with a decimal and two zeros. Since Basic does not do this to numbers, you must do it yourself. The way to do this is to convert the number into a string (text) and then manipulate the string to look like you want it to. Since this will have to be done to every number, we will make this a subroutine that can be called from wherever we are in the program.

10 Input X

20 Z=X: GOSUB 1000: PRINT Z\$: GOTO 10

OK. Here we ask for any number; set that number equal to Z which will be the variable we use in the subroutine; when we return from the subroutine we print the string that represents the number and then go back and ask for another number. When we have tested the routine for all possibilities and verified that it works, we can then use it in our program. Just set Z equal to the number you want formatted and call the subroutine, then print the string.

1000 = INT(100*(Z+.005))/100

Here we add .005 to the number to round it upwards, we multiply by 100 to move the decimal place two places to the right, and then take the integer of the number which drops off everything past the decimal point. Then we divide by 100 to move the decimal place two places to the left to leave it where we found it. Now we have rounded our number up and forced it to two decimal points. But it was a whole number; we still have no decimal point. So let's call in the string trick.

1010 Z\$=STR\$(Z)

We can now manipulate Z\$ however we want.

What possible conditions can we have? Z can either be of the form xxxxxxxx or xxxxxx.x or xxxxx.xx.

Remember that we have forced it to two decimal places and the other two choices are due to Basic's dropping of trailing zeros and decimal points on whole numbers. So we think through how we do it mentally and then write that logic down as our program. If the decimal is in the third position from the right, we are through; if it is in the second position, we add a zero to the rightmost position. Otherwise, we add a decimal and two zeros.

1020 Z1\$ = RIGHT\$(Z\$,3): IF LEFT\$(Z1\$,1)=". " THEN 1050

1030 Z1\$ = RIGHT\$(Z\$,2): IF LEFT\$(Z1\$,1)=". " THEN Z\$ = Z\$+"0": GOTO 1050

1040 Z\$ = Z\$+".00"

In 1020 we take the right three positions of Z\$ and see if the first position on the left holds a decimal. If so we go to line 1050; if not then we take the right two positions of Z\$ and examine the left position to see if that is a decimal; if so we add a zero and go to line 1050; if not then we add a decimal and two zeros to the string. Now, if we print the number it will be left justified and the decimals will not line up unless all numbers are the same length. So, we must pad the string with spaces on the left side until all numbers ARE the same length. Decide how big your biggest number will be (allowing for the decimal place and the leading space for a minus sign). Let's use 9 places for this example.

1050 IF LEN(Z\$) < 9 THEN Z\$ = " "+Z\$: GOTO 1050

This will put as many spaces in front of Z\$ as necessary until the length of Z\$ (how many positions or columns exist) is equal to 9. This completes our manipulation. We have rounded up, forced to two decimal places, moved the decimal to the third position from the right, and padded the string to the length of the maximum number of positions we expect to have to print. We can now return this value to the line that called the subroutine.

1060 RETURN

If we want to use the rounded up value in further calculations, we can use the value command which makes a number out of a string.

X = VAL(Z\$)

That's all programming is, putting your logic down as commands. The main trick is being familiar enough with Basic commands to know what tools are applicable, and in being specific concerning the logic involved.

Lattice Amiga C Compiler, Version 5.0

Amiga Software Review by Dale Munn Commodore Users of Bartlesville

The first version of Lattice Amiga C that I purchased was release 3.03 which I bought at the end of November, 1986. Within 3 months, release 3.10 was announced and as there were many problems with the 3.03 release it should have been a welcome event. Since it was within the 90 day warranty period, I expected a free update. Not so. I was informed by Lattice that this was not a maintenance type of release but a new release containing new features. The main thing they included over the bug fixes were some text management utilities. The update to 3.10 set me back \$75, presumably for some text management utilities which have never really been used. Then in November, 1987, Lattice announced release 4.0. This version had many improvements over version 3.10, the upgrade from 3.10 cost \$45. About this time I was beginning to feel like I didn't really own a Lattice C compiler, but that I was only renting it. So, I guess there wasn't really much surprise when in November, 1988, Lattice offered another upgrade to release 5.0 for another \$75 update fee. The features promised were enough to entice me to spring for another update. For the first time it was possible to call Lattice to place the order, not toll free, but an improvement over past upgrades where the Lattice Upgrade card had to be mailed in before Lattice would send the new upgrade.

Before getting into the features of Lattice 5.0, a little history about C compilers on the Amiga is in order. The original C compiler for the Amiga was actually written by Lattice and marketed by Commodore. This compiler was not very robust to say the least. Development of applications was a real chore. The Commodore linker, Alink, took so long that the public domain developed its own linker, Blink. Users who purchased the original compiler from Commodore have had difficulty switching over and getting updates from Lattice and the updates are not available from Commodore. In the meantime, hearing the screaming developers, a white knight came to the rescue. This white knight was Manx with their Aztec C compiler. Manx had played a little trick with word length and decided that the 68000 was basically a 16 bit machine and had based their compiler on that fact, making the size of an INT 16 bits instead of 32 bits. As a result, the code produced was smaller than that produced by Lattice. Manx also provided an improved development environment that sped up the program development cycle. Much of the public domain and commercial software has been switched over to the

Manx compiler. This has probably resulted in less than perfect software because of the use of 16 bit integers instead of 32 bit integers. To be competitive with Manx, Lattice release 4.0 produced a compiler that was also capable of producing 16 bit integers. Manx came out with a source debugger, Lattice had none. And so it goes, Lattice has been on a course to catch up with Manx in an attempt to win back the lost developers.

Version 5.0 promises to close the gap and put Lattice back on top. The new features in 5.0 are a source level debugger, global optimizer, code profiler, compiler companion, integrated environment, support for 68020 and 68881, "near" and "far" keywords, and new, comprehensive documentation. My copy of 5.0 was received within about a week of calling in the order. The initial appearance was very good.

Documentation for the previous versions has been in a spiral book with 6 1/4 by 8 1/2 inch pages. The release 4.0 document was less than an inch thick. The release 5.0 documentation is in two loose leaf binders with pages that are 6 1/2 by 9 1/8 inches. Each binder has about an inch thickness of documentation. The documentation is tabbed and Volume 1 includes a User's Guide, Utilities, Commands, and Editor sections, while Volume 2 includes the Debugger, Library Reference, and Master Index sections. The release software comes on five 3.5 inch 880K Amiga disks.

The system I am currently using consists of an Amiga 2000 with 3 megabytes of memory and a 65 megabyte hard disk. This is mentioned because for a long time I struggled with earlier releases of Lattice C first on the 1000 with 512 Kb of memory and later on the 2-000 with 1 Mb. In both cases, with two 3.5 inch disk drives and limited memory, program development was a real pain. Now with the hard disk those problems are pretty much taken care of. I have not yet humbled myself to try to set up a 1.3 system and a Lattice environment without using the hard disk, but I suspect that if you don't have lots of memory to set up a good environment, that program development will be quite a chore.

Included with the 5.0 release is a set of Lattice Programmer Utilities which contain the following: BUILD, CXREF, DIFF, EXTRACT, FILES, GREP, LMK, LPROF, and LSTAT, SPLAT, TB, TOUCH, and WC. Some of these have been available from public domain sources, the remainder are probably

from other Lattice packages which used to be sold separately. All I am doing here is mentioning that they are included as I have not had much chance to work with them yet.

The first thing I did after I installed 5.0 on my hard disk was to link some existing C programs which had been previously developed under the 4.0 release. The first test was to link an old main object with the new runtime libraries. Linking went without a hitch and the resultant module was smaller than before. I then re-compiled the module and encountered difficulty with the main routine. This was the result of having prototyping enabled. Lattice has now defined main to

Version 5.0 promises to close the gap and put Lattice back on top.

be of type void. This may match the new ANSI proposed standard but does not match the newest release of Kernighan and Ritchie. The new release of Lattice does not allow the main routine to return an error code. In order to indicate an error, it is necessary to call exit with a non-zero parameter. After correcting the main routine, the program was successfully compiled and linked. The resulting module was again smaller and no difficulty was encountered in execution of the newly linked program. When I switched from 3.03 to 3.10, massive debugging was required as a result of some changes in the way files were handled. With 5.0 there appears to be much more compatibility with the 4.0 release to the extent that this time object files can be mixed between the two releases.

The two items in 5.0 of most interest are the Lattice Screen Editor (LSE) and the Debugger (CPR - CodeProbe). The LSE has been previously available, but since it was an extra cost item, most non-professional users opted to use one of the excellent public domain editors available on the Amiga. The Debugger was to me a complete surprise and well-kept secret. (Why am I always the last to find out?)

With pull-down menus, gadgets, scrollbar and on-line help, the Lattice Screen Editor is easy to learn to use. Unfortunately, since there is a scrollbar, it is not possible to display a full 80 character width, however, typing to the right of column 76 results in the line scrolling to the left so that all characters typed can

be seen. Lines which are longer than 76 characters are indicated with a reverse video > in column 77. If you don't like the foreground or background colors, they can be cycled independently on the window. The LSE window can be placed on a separate interlace screen. It is not possible to place the window on a separate non-interlaced screen.

There are two features among many which are of extra importance to program developers. The first is the ability to compile a program and step through the errors without ever leaving the editor. This is done by just pressing F4 while editing a C program. If there are errors, you are prompted to "continue", "abort", or "ignore". The cursor moves to the line containing the error. After continuing until there are no more errors, F5 can be used to step through the errors. It is possible to change the compiler options used within LSE. To do this, just press CTRL-F4 and the options in effect are shown together with a line to enter the new options. One problem with this is that if there is an error in the compiler options and you compile, the message "ERROR: COMPILER REPORTED ERRORS" appears and pressing F5 does not show any compiler errors. One common error which may cause this is omitting to specify "-oram:".

The other feature which is impressive is the undo. There are 50 levels of undo, so if you change your mind or are not really sure what you just did, you can step back and undo the last 50 edit strokes. As an option, the undo command can prompt with each change which indicates what operation the undo will perform before doing it.

The LSE can also be customized somewhat to make it match your favorite editor, i.e., you can define the key to press for a delete word, etc. LSE also contains provision for automatic file back-up and keystroke saver macros. It does not preserve the Amiga file name flags, so if you edit a script file it is necessary to use the protect command to reset the "s" flag. However, since it does not preserve them, the "a" flag is reset after a file is edited. The microemac that comes with 1.3 preserves all flags including the "a" flag which is used by disk backup utilities to identify modified files.

LSE has the capability for auto-indenting on opening brace({), but it is not really useful if you are one of the C programmers who likes to have the brace indented on a line by itself with the next line indented to the same level as the brace above it. LSE supports multiple text windows at the same time. This feature is not implemented as well as some in that it is difficult to get the same text file into two windows. It is necessary to open the file twice and this could result

in changing the wrong window. When you attempt to quit after making a change in a file, a requestor appears to inquire "Do you want to ABANDON your work?". This gives you a second chance to save your work if you forgot that you made some changes. All in all, LSE is a good editor to use.

If you can write a C program to perform a specified function and have it always work as designed the first time, then you can quit reading here. Most applications of any size require some degree of debugging after the initial coding. In the past this has involved the somewhat tedious and time consuming procedure of examining the code and placing strategic print statements or other debug statements throughout the program in an effort to track down the problem. With Lattice 5.0 there is a source level debugger called CodeProbe, which is easy to use and should prove to be a real time saver in the debug stage of program development. With CodeProbe (CPR) it is possible to single step through lines of C code, or examine/modify C variables and structures by name. Setting a breakpoint is as simple as double clicking on the source statement. Breakpoints can also be set conditionally on either a repeat count or on the value of a variable in the C program. You can ask about a variable and determine its type from the debugger. Ever wonder about where a variable was modified? With CPR you can set WB to cause a breakpoint to occur when a variable changes value. CPR also will read an optional script file on start up so that user options can be preset for each debugger session.

Of course, one of the disadvantages of a debugger is it may require special compilations. CPR is no exception. Special flags are required on the LC and BLINK commands to produce a module with debug information required by CPR. Doing this step certainly requires less time than what was required before to add print statements and then re-compile with them.

When CodeProbe begins execution it opens two windows on the screen which could be a separate screen, the Workbench screen or even an interlace screen. The window at the bottom of the screen is the dialogue window. This is where commands to CPR are typed. The other window is the source window. In this window, CPR displays the current lines of source being executed. When CPR first starts, this window initially shows "source not available", but changes to the name of the module source file after CPR has processed it. There is a simple option to allow showing the assembly language instructions which go with each instruction. At that level, breakpoints can be placed on the individual instruction and tracing

involves stepping through each low level instruction. When tracing a program you can trace into sub-programs or just trace the main flow. This is a real advantage when you know the lower level routines are already working. The dialogue window can be zoomed to fill the screen by pressing F2. Also there is a scroll bar which allows examining previous commands and output. This is particularly useful in examining structures.

Two other windows can be activated. These are the register window and the watch window. The register window shows all of the 68000 registers and flags. The watch window is used to show the current value of the variables which are being watched.

While you are in the debugger, variables and registers can be modified. This is useful in correcting minor errors in program execution to save re-compiling. One section of the manual is on modifying code or data. After reading this section two or three times, I still do not know what they mean by modifying code. There does not appear to be any easy way to change the code without hand coding a new instruction and storing it into memory. Ideally, it would be nice to be able to just patch in a new C instruction with the debugger when a problem is found. The debugger should also update the source file to reflect the patch.

There is one other option in the debugger which should be mentioned. This is the autoswap option which default to on. When in this mode, the screen swaps between the debugger and the application on every line traced. This may be useful sometimes but is annoying when tracing through long sections of code. It is, however, easy to disable after your realize what is causing the flicker.

I have not had any serious problem while executing the debugger. There does appear to be some tendency for some programs to crash after finishing with the debugger. I have also encountered the debugger reporting in a requestor that he "caught a GURU" and did I want a snapshot. After several passes through the manual I have not found any reference to this feature and how to use it.

As you should be able to gather, I am well pleased with the 5.0 release of Lattice C. The retail price of this release is \$300, however, it is probably available through mail order at about \$200. Now that Lattice has a good product all we can say is watch out Manx and wonder about what they are going to do for the next release!



New Public Domain!

New Products:

Design 3D SlipStream JUG Action Fighter Indiana Jones Kennedy Approach
Formation ManHunter PoliceQuest Rampage Prison Zork Zero Thinker ChromaPaint BattleHawks
Hostage AuntArtic Adventure Twilight Zone GoldRush ThunderBlade
TestDrive II City Desk 2.0 Journey Project Master Emerald Mines II

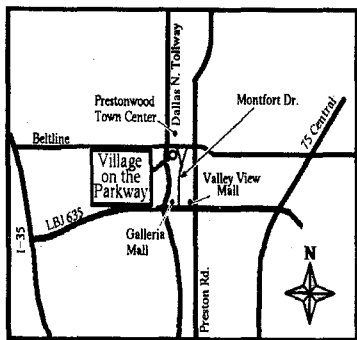
Specials:

Arkanoid Torch 2081 Marauder II Haicalc WBExtras, Photon Paint 1.0 Grabbit
Zoom! 2+2 President is Missing Encore Stellaryx Video Wizard Financial + BPaint Fancy Fonts 3D
LexCheck Yamaha Keyboard Setup

DELUXE PAINT III * STAR WARS * EVIL
GARDEN * PROFESSIONAL DRAW * 1.3
ROMS * RAM EXPANSION * SCULPT
ANIMATE 4D * TECHNO COP * EX-
PANSION TECHNOLOGIES HARD
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ELECTRONIC ARTS *
CALIFORNIA ACCESS *
LINKWORD LAN-
GUAGE SERIES *
THE WORKS I
PLATINUM * BAL-
LISTIX * PROFES-
SIONAL
DATARETRIEVE *
SPACE QUEST II *
PHASAR 3.0 * GOLD
OF THE REALM *
PERFECT SOUND
500 * MOVIESET-
TER * AMIGA
WORLD * AMAZING
COMPUTING *
AMIGA TRANSAC-

Amazing Computer Systems

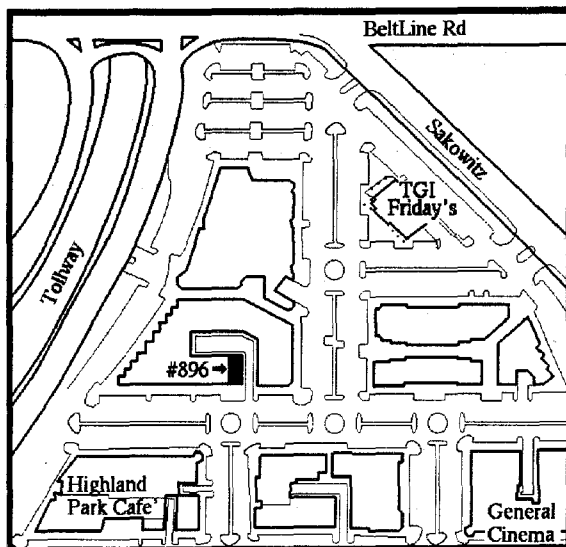
TOR * INFO! *
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TERNATIONAL *
AHOY'S AMIGA
USER * GREAT
V A L L E Y
PRODUCTS HARD
DRIVES * EXPAN-
SION TECH-
NOLOGIES
FLASHCARD * EX-
PRESS COPY
HARD DRIVE
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BALANCE OF POWER 1990 * CAP-
TAIN FIZZ * GFA BASIC 3.0 *



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New Stuff I Just Got

Amiga Software Reviews by Bill Raecke

Mid-Cities Commodore Club

Snake Pit by Incognito Software

It's not a new idea. It doesn't set new standards in graphics, animation, or sound quality. But it is a terrific game. At least that's my opinion.

Your character is a snake. Your snake must travel through a maze eating pellets. The problem arises when, as each pellet is eaten, you find yourself getting longer. Bump into yourself and you loose a life - and you get to start that level over again.

Complications are added in the form of purple on white pellets (grow pellets are red on white) which cause you to shrink rather than grow. This may sound great until you realize that it is possible to shrink away to nothing. There are also pink bricks forming portions of the maze. Pink bricks can be moved by pushing on them.

The game may be played with either a joystick or the keyboard (keyboard keys are definable). Background music while the game is in progress consists of drums played at low volume - very effective. The art work is very clear and easy to look at over long periods of time. The real shock is that the game multitasks. You can keep it paused in the background and then play while you download a file or compile a program.

There are 100 levels. The game also contains a screen editor with which you can design your own levels - a nice feature that seems to be gaining in popularity lately.

My recommendation? Buy it! It's fun! A big thumbs up.



NIB V1.0 by Stellar Systems, Inc.

I am one of those people who is paranoid about archival backups. I have a backup of every program in my library - just in case. When I purchase a new product, if I am unable to back it up, it sits on the shelf until I am able to do so. I haven't needed the archive copy often, but when I need it it's nice to know that it's there. As a result, I am always on the lookout for some new copy utility that will allow me to backup my latest purchases.

A couple of months ago I reviewed Raw Copy V1.3. My opinion at that time was that it was one of the worst software investments I had ever made. Several club members took issue with my statement and said I should give it another chance. Some people are apparently quite happy with it and thought I gave it a

bum rap. Being willing to admit that I may have been hasty the first time around, I spent another three hours with the program copying (or trying to copy) various programs in my library. I have not changed my opinion.

All that, however, is merely to preface this introduction to an excellent new copy program. NIB V1.0 is the most powerful copy utility I have seen to date. Not only does it seem capable of copying

NIB V1.0 is the most powerful copy utility I have seen to date.

everything that I have been able to copy with other programs, but it has also managed to successfully copy a couple of things that have been sitting on my shelf waiting for the right utility to come along.

NIB is small - it takes up only about 30K for the program and another 40K or so for the associated files including a couple of bootup screens. This makes it very quick to load. The user interface is quite intuitive (where have I heard that word before?). There are parameter files for many popular titles, but, unlike other copy programs, the parameter list is simply included in the list of ways to copy a disk. In other words, when you get ready to copy a disk, you select "Parameter". A list is provided of all special software parameters available. On the top of the same list are the normal copy options: Normal DOS, Normal Nibble, Normal Nibble + Index, Quick Nibble, and Quick Nibble + Index. This makes selection of a copy mode very quick and painless.

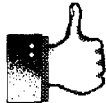
On the right side of the screen is vertical bar. During copying, it will show you where you are in the copy process: If a track is successfully copied, a green tic mark will appear - if there is a problem, a red tic will appear. The bar can also be used to select special tracks to be copied i.e. to re-copy tracks using a more powerful method that the first method didn't handle properly. Simply mark the desired tracks with the appropriate color for the copy process to be used for those tracks and the program will act accordingly. This is very simple and very powerful.

Problems? The program does not currently support

single drive copying, nor does it check to see if the write protect switch is set properly on either the source or destination disk. These improvements will be included on the forthcoming commercial version.

The best news is that this program is available right now on the club BBS and in the club library as a shareware effort. You can become a registered owner of NIB V1.0 by making a donation of just \$16 anytime before May 15, 1989. In return you will get the first commercial version (2.0) free of charge, and the first commercial update at a reduced rate.

Since this program seems to be state of the art right now, send in your money. I already have.



A Note of Thanks to Precision Software

The MCCC recently came into a windfall for the Commodore 64/128 chapters in the form of 100 copies each of two titles, Supertype and Superbase Starter, from Precision Software of Irving, Texas. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Dan Browning and to Precision Software Limited for this very generous contribution to our Club.

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The Lurking Horror

Software Review by John Shortle

Reprinted From Amy Today

I recently completed Infocom's "The Lurking Horror," so I thought I might pass on some of my thoughts to you. "The Lurking Horror" is like any other Infocom text adventure game - it's got a solid text parser and all that, it's laced with humor, and it comes with the little gadgets in the package. If you have never played an Infocom game before, you may want to read some of my other reviews of Infocom products in Amy Today issues 1-3 and 2-1.

What makes this game different from the rest of Infocom's adventures? For one thing, there are digitized sound effects scattered throughout the adventure. For example, when you open a hatch, the game plays a short digitized sound of a squeaky hatch being pried open. Some sounds play continuously. For example, when you are in a tunnel filled with rats, the game cycles through a short, squeaking, chattering sound. Fortunately, you can toggle the sound off when you become annoyed. These sounds are an Amiga specific implementation of the game. As far as I know, no Infocom text games for any other computer do this. "The Lurking Horror" is also the only AMIGA text Infocom game with sound effects. Infocom's new graphics adventures may do something like this, but I don't know. The sound effects are good if you've never heard digitized sounds before, but nothing spectacular. Some are quite amusing, and overall, they add a new depth of entertainment to the game.

"The Lurking Horror" is Infocom's first horror adventure game. The plot of the game is somewhat non-existent, however. You are a student at G.U.E Tech. Apparently, your goal for the game is to complete a paper by the next morning (another all-nighter). You log into the school computer and start to edit your paper, but unusual text begins to fill the screen. Soon, the computer screen has you in a trance and you awake to find yourself holding an unusual stone. As wander around the school, you begin to notice many more unusual things - a suicide note, a zombie janitor, and a live human hand. After puzzling your way through many more unusual creatures/persons/circumstances, you find only one monster in the way of your perfect one hundred points. The ending is somewhat anticlimactic (despite a very amusing final sentence). You look back, and what have you done? Nothing really. You've killed a bunch of monsters, but so what? You haven't saved the school from destruction or anything like that

(although you did save the school computer system earlier in the game). You haven't even finished your paper.

Oh well, you did solve some pretty good puzzles. On an Infocom scale (high standard here), I give "The Lurking Horror" a puzzle rating of pretty good.

Overall, "The Lurking Horror" is a good game. It's not as good as some of Infocom's best, but it's pretty close. With the addition of digitized sound effects, it's a must for any Infocom fan.



New Demos For C-64 Disk Library

by Brad Dumler

A new pair of demo disks will be available from the C64 disk library this month. Thanks to Berkeley Softworks, via SCOPE, we will have a demo disk for GEOS C64 v2.0 and some of the other BSW GEOS software products.

The second new disk is from Digital Vision, Inc., also via SCOPE, and offers a look at their COMPUTEREYES Video Image Acquisition System. COMPUTEREYES provides the capability to capture images from a VCR, video camera, another computer, or any other standard video source and use the acquired images as hires graphic screens in many applications.

To view either demo, execute the command LOAD "DEMO",8 followed by the RUN command.

Thought For the Month

It's a small world,
but I wouldn't want to paint it.

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Normal Meeting Schedule

First Saturday	MCCC Board of Directors
Second Tuesday	Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
Second Saturday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
Third Tuesday	Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
Third Thursday	Amiga Central Chapter
Third Saturday	Fort Worth Chapter
	HEB Chapter

(Check Monthly Schedule for Last Minute Changes)

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Vice President	Jon Moreland	579-1293
Treasurer	Fred Noble	838-5459
Secretary/Reporter	Robyn Wilson	282-3458
Librarian	Curtis Crago	281-0568

The Fine Print

The Mid-Cities Commodore Club is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the collection and dissemination of computer knowledge, to the encouragement of computer education, and to the use of Commodore computers in the home, at school, and in business. Appropriate and legal use of all types of software is encouraged by this club.

The MCCC is not connected with Commodore Business Machines, Inc. Commodore and Commodore product names (PET, CBM, VIC, C64, C128, and Amiga) are registered trademarks of Commodore, Inc.

Our meetings are open to all. Membership dues are \$20 per year or \$12 for six months and entitle the member to a monthly mailed copy of the MCCC News, free access to the club's extensive public domain and shareware software library, and discounts at many area merchants. An additional \$12 annual fee provides access to the MCCC ASCII and Graphic bulletin board systems.

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The deadline for submissions to the MCCC News is the Monday following the third Saturday of each month. Payment must accompany all ad copy. Make checks payable to MCCC and mail to P.O. Box 813, Bedford, Texas 76095.

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Amiga By-The-Loop Craig Bird

April's gathering-by-the-loop began with announcements of both the MCCC Spring Event and the AmiForum, now history as this newsletter goes to press. There was much activity and planning afoot to ensure their success. We hope you were able to enjoy them both!

Our meeting featured Shawn Glisson of Haitex Resources, who demonstrated both X-CAD Designer and X-Specs 3D. X-CAD Designer is a professional 2D CAD design system easy enough for the beginner to use and yet advanced enough for the professional. Some of X-CAD's features include: auto and user-definable menus, auto dimensioning, the ability to break entities into two parts, definable text fonts, and support for all standard pen plotters and dot-matrix printers as well as an external digitizer. X-CAD does require a minimum of 2 MB RAM and dual floppy drives or a hard drive.

X-Specs 3D is a unique concept for three-dimensional viewing of digitized images on a two-dimensional computer screen. Each package includes one pair of liquid crystal shutter glasses, an interface (supporting 2 pair of glasses), "Space Spuds", a demo of 3D images, and "D3D" - a program which allows you to display any pair of images stored in IFF format. Most paint packages available can also be used. In addition, Haitex is now accepting orders for the X-Specs 3D developers kit. This kit includes the technical data and software required to create your own stereoscopic 3D applications using

assembly, Basic, C, or Modula-2 programming languages. Also, a VCR adapter is planned for release. With the VCR adapter, you can view your work using video tape. Many thanks to Shawn Glisson and Haitex Resources of Carrollton for their terrific demo.

This evening's door prize, "Crystal Hammer", a breakout style game, was donated by Amazing Computer Systems of Dallas and won by Jeff Persyn.

CHAPTER NEWS

Amazing Computers also set up a table of the very latest in productivity and games software as well as hardware, all at user group discount prices! Look for Amazing to have this table set up a future meetings, too.

See you on May 9th at 7:30 PM. Don't miss out!

Amiga Central
Bill Raecke

If you missed the April meeting, you missed a good one. We were treated to a demonstration of Deluxe Paint III by our own VP, Jack Smith. Deluxe Paint III looks terrific. All the ease of use that has made Deluxe Paint the standard on the Amiga, but with added features, speed, and ANIMATION! Who ever heard of putting animation capabilities in a paint program! Does the phrase, "Only on an Amiga" ring any bells?

The demonstration was impressive. We watched while Jack played an animated sequence, then MADE A BRUSH OF THE ANIMATION, then used the animated brush to add to the

existing animation. It all seemed quite straightforward and easy to use - and it blew me away. Once more, competing hardware will have to take a back seat as Amiga and Electronic Arts show them how it should be done.

Thanks, Jack, for the excellent presentation. And for those who missed it - be at the next meeting. You never know what you might be missing.

In other news of the evening, our question and answer session lasted almost an hour. Very enlightening. The best news was word that the new graphics chips should be available any time now. One meg of chip RAM will provide the necessary space that we have been needing for some time now. It will probably also provide the impetus for yours truly to finally upgrade to the 2000, since 1000 owners like myself will probably be left out on this one.

See you at the next meeting. Don't miss it.

Arlington/Grand Prairie
Eddie Allen

The April meeting's attendance was down from our normal figure slightly, but if you counted the number of computers present, then we were about normal.

On one machine, we had Up Periscope wandering around the ocean, looking to destroy or be destroyed, while another had its sights quite a bit higher in the air, and all the while Herschel had a scrolling billboard extolling MCCC and its participants.

I, Eddie Allen, had the pleasure to expound on Up Periscope, a submarine simulator. When one buys a simulator, one tends to go along the lines of his/her favorite reading material. This simulator

(distributed by ActionSoft, with animation licensed from SubLOGIC) allows you to control the exact degree of difficulty you desire. Your cruises can be as long, or as short, as you care to make them.

Brad Dumler had a running demonstration disk from Compute's Gazette going prior to his showing of the 'Echelon' flight simulator. This simulator is very forgiving, you can bore through the ground, and it will not force you to start over from the beginning, which is good for us that are not real quick on the draw. Your view is from the cockpit, with the appropriate gauges on the bottom.

One point brought out is that you can usually take your time when using a simulator. The limitations on the simulators that are available now-a-days only being the limits of your imagination.

Next month, May, Eldor Luedtke Jr. (President of the HEB chapter) will present an active graphics BBS demonstration using a null modem between two computers. Also showing D-Paint for the 64, which can create graphics to use in the BBS. With a head of steam, he will also demonstrate some voice recognition/synthesis.

The Grand Prairie workshop will meet the 2nd Saturday.

Until then, here's to you kid.

Fort Worth
Bill Raecke

The news from the Fort Worth Chapter was not available by the time this newsletter goes to the printer, but there is some important news that I will pass along nonetheless. The normal meeting date for the Fort Worth Chapter

will be changing from the second Saturday of the month to the third Saturday of the month. Time and place will remain the same. Apparently there was a scheduling conflict at the library and the MCCC lost.

At any rate, your newsletter editor has not gone crazy (at least no more so than usual). The chapter really does meet on the 20th of May as shown on the monthly calendar. Don't miss it!

Hurst-Eules-Bedford
Robyn Wilson

Besides the planned agenda, there were a lot of small subjects that were discussed that turned out to be rather lengthy but interesting, such as Geos disks. Some documentation was handed out for instructions on how to use DPaint and on some hints for using your Commodore computer. Get this information from Fred Noble at the front table at the next meeting. The main agenda included Daniel

happens more often after the first level when the dragon (ghost) sees how fast you can type. Watch his expressions and colors as he changes from the ghost to the dragon. What is happening here is you are being pushed to go faster and better yourself all the time. There are six options at the main menu to choose from. Number one is the actual game where you can play and have the information from your typing show up on a chart when you first load up the game. Number two is a drill with random letters and number four is with whole words. Both two and four will allow you to select your own typing speed to keep up with and will tell you what keys you will be using. Number three is practice for the game and also tells you what keys you will be using. Number six is for typing straight copy paragraphs. Create your own paragraphs or use the ones already there.

The C64 Bulletin Board System exchange did not work properly. Eldor and Okley worked on fixing it during the meeting. They decided to try different software and it worked fine. The name of the program is Laser 128 and may be demonstrated at the next meeting.

The cataloger disks were talked about by Jesse Carden and Cheryl Howard. This is the six sided, three disk, listing of all the disks in the MCCC library.

At the next meeting we will be having the BBS demonstration. This may be Laser 128 or another program, but the main purpose is to show how a typical BBS system works. There is also going to be a flea market for Commodore related products. Bring in your programs with documentation, hardware, modems, etc. to sell. Also, a talk will be given on the DOS Wedge and a biorhythm program.

CHAPTER NEWS

Carden introducing his library of disks that would only include games for the C64. There will still be our regular librarian, Curtis, who will have games and other subjects also. I brought in my Wiztype diskette and demonstrated it. The cataloger disks were also discussed.

Wiztype is a typing tutor that is game oriented. It involves the Wizard of Id and a ghost. You try to type the words that are put out by the ghost before he turns into a dragon and decides to turn the Wizard into a pile of cinders by breathing fire on him. This

Calendar of Events

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--|---------------|--|
| May 6 & 7 | AmiFORUM
10 till 6 Saturday 12 till 6 Sunday
DFW Hilton Executive Conference Center | May 18 | Amiga Central Chapter
7:30 PM - Arlington Community Center
Bill Keatley, 485-0666 |
| May 9 | Amiga By-The-Loop Chapter
7:30 PM - N. Richland Hills Church of Christ
Brent Wood, 246-3707 | May 20 | Fort Worth Chapter
1:30 PM - Southwest Regional Library
Bob Krause - 292-6639 |
| May 13 | Arlington/Grand Prairie Workshop
1:30 PM - Grand Prairie Library
Louis Nailor, 214-262-4576 | | Hurst-Euless-Bedford Chapter
1:30 PM - Hurst Recreation Center
Eldor Luedtke, Jr., 626-0518 |
| May 16 | Arlington/Grand Prairie Chapter
7:00 PM - Arlington Community Center
Glen Herring, 572-0489 | May 22 | JUNE NEWSLETTER DEADLINE |
| | | June 3 | MCCC Board of Directors Meeting |



MCCC NEWS

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